

No. 126 • Oct. 1 • \$2.50 (\$3.75 in Canada)

AMAZING HEROES



MILLENNIUM™



DC COMICS DOMINATES '87 KIRBY AWARDS



BEST SINGLE ISSUE
DARK KNIGHT #1

★
BEST WRITER
ALAN MOORE
WATCHMEN™

★
BEST WRITER/ARTIST
ALAN MOORE/DAVE GIBBONS
WATCHMEN

★
BEST ART TEAM
FRANK MILLER/KLAUS JANSOHN/LYNN VARLEY
DARK KNIGHT

★
BEST GRAPHIC ALBUM
DARK KNIGHT

★
BEST CONTINUING SERIES
SWAMP THING™

★
BEST FINITE SERIES
DARK KNIGHT

★
BEST NEW SERIES
DARK KNIGHT



CONTENTS

No. 126 • AMAZING HEROES • October 1st

F E A T U R E S

THE END OF AN ETERNITY, THE BEGINNING OF A... MILLENNIUM

A Preview of DC's Monumental
New Cross-Over Mini-Series
by Andy Mangels

17

CHARLES VESS INTERVIEW

A discussion with the artist behind the
new "Warriors Three" in *Metal Men*.
by Mark Ashcraft

28

X OF A KIND—TEN NAFF COMICS

A look at ten real baddies.
by Frank Plowright

43



D E P A R T M E N T S

EDITORIAL 4 **COMICS IN REVIEW**
by R.A. Jones 55

NEWSLINE 5

COMING DISTRACTIONS 11 **AMAZING READERS** 66

FIRST LOOK—Eddie Campbell's
Bacchus 36 **EVERETT TRUE** 70

DC'S BOOKSHELF
The South With Lies Again 59 **DON ROSA'S
INFORMATION CENTER** 73

Our Cover: Millennium looms over the entire DC
Universe. Art by Keith Wilson. © DC Comics, Inc.

HERNANDEZ HEAVEN



Close to 600 pages of classic, vintage *Love and Rockets* material by Gilbert, Jaime, and Mario Hernandez—all from the first 12 issues of the award-winning comic—that's what you'll find in *Love and Rockets, Books One through Four*.

The *Love & Rockets* collections are a chronological compilation of all the Hernandezes' work from the *Love & Rockets* magazines. Each volume features new covers, full-color reproductions of the original *Love & Rockets* covers, and new stories by Jaime and Gilbert. The fourth volume is coming just in time for Christmas—reserve your copy now!

THE END OF ETERNITY—THE BEGINNING OF A

MILLENNIUM



by Andy Mangels

Let's take us to Earth, where the new major revolutionary story would soon occur. Then, the *Guardians* didn't appear left with their *Quinn* bodies to "another place."

It is now September, 1987, and a *Guardian* and *Quinn* have returned to Earth. To find the two people who will become the template for this new story, we must first look at the history of the *Guardians*. They have gathered the forces of Earth together to find their true people and to help protect them. For the *Blue* heroes are meant to do things wherever they have to do to stop the people, and destroy the *Guardians'* plans.

Thus begins *Millennium*, DC's

major new cross-over series of the year, spanning fifty first separate books within a relatively short run number of time. Written by Steve Englehart, laid out by Joe Simon, and finished by Sam Glavin, Miller, again in an eight-part story which will appear weekly, and which will change the lives of every man, woman and super hero on Earth.

These Old Cross-Over Series Blues

Steve Englehart usually admits his enthusiasm for the story. "I liked the idea when I first heard about it. I've always liked their books, and this is one of the ultimate ones back. We've used everybody in the DC Universe



An Interview With Charles Vess

by Mark Askwith

MARK ASKWITH: So Charles, where did your excitement as a comic artist begin?

CHARLES VESS: I started drawing comic books when I was ten years old. I drew my first one on the back of my father's official stationery one Saturday morning in about four hours. It was about refugees paying rent and called *A Man*. It was about a man who had glowing hair, a glowing head, and glowing feet, so all I had to draw was the torso of the body! [Laughs] Very primitive. I was very quick. I got into *Crusar* later and started drawing big superhero comic strips. I was able to do *Kirby* for a while.

ASKWITH: What eventually did you switch to comic books?

VESS: I was drawing space with Michael Kalous and I'd met Dennis Wingo, Jeff Jones and Barry

Strey drawing modern bits too much. Anything medieval had a much greater appeal. I started drawing little mini-art de vis and an occasional, and I started toward the art movement. Science fiction was done to me, with hard edges, while fantasy is an escape, with all its temples and magic. I appreciate that more, although I've learned to deal with some hard edges over the years.

I spent two and a half years doing an occasional little bit, mostly—*Warner's Mag*—while in comic strip firms showed up on *Boys' World Magazine*. In 1976 I had the opportunity to move to New York with no money—and I did. I foundered, would. I got as far as I have ever gotten. The first job I got in New York was illustrating *The Hobbit* for *Academy Books*. It was through Walt Whitman and based on the idea once there. It was exciting at the time to work for such a big art publishing house.

ASKWITH: What eventually did you switch to comic books?

VESS: I was drawing space with Michael Kalous and I'd met Dennis Wingo, Jeff Jones and Barry

Strey. I know lots of people in the business, but I wasn't interested in doing comics because I'd heard so many horror stories from these people and some of them were drawing comics anyway. I was interested in illustration and doing fairly well at it, but Kalous kept being great stories that were boring and therefore difficult to draw. I realized that if I wrote my own stories I could draw the things I wanted to draw. I was going to Central Park, regularly—playing volleyball with the Harvard D.C. team and I had a whole bunch of relatives—I met Goodwin, Allen Milgrom, Jim Shooter—and I became social friends with them. I was showing at conventions and *Academy* walked by my day and said, "Like your work, why don't you do a story for Epic?" I said okay and spent eight months doing an eight-page story. I talked to *Academy* and then added on an extra page. The story was printed and went over well, so I did a bunch more stories. Allen Milgrom told me to do something like *The Marvel Fanfare*. The first thing I did was a Dr. Strange story because I had always liked him. I was "improvised dimensions." I can do

Below: a Charles Vess sketchbook drawing entitled "In Study Throat" Opposite: artwork for the comic "Silver Seal" promotional poster. This will appear in the Book of the Night series from Dark Horse.





From *Web of Spider-Man #2*: How does Spider-Man in a beautiful and bright New York.

but? At Milgrom had the writer Roger Silver wrote a story that he thought I would want to do. I had fun with it.

I kept doing stuff for him and working on illustrations. At Milgrom asked for another story. I thought, "I like my job, but how can that be worked into Marvel? Oh, the Tale of Agatha!" At called up a writer and said, "I've got this story which I like to do. I want you to write the story." I handed out to him. He wrote a story that was less of fun. It wasn't violent. It wasn't people butting each other over the head. I'm not drawing it. I don't like doing this and I'm making money. If we did a graphic novel. To make more money and have more fun. I talked to Alan Zakheim and we walked into Marvel one day and I went up to him. He said, "Could we do a graphic novel about Agatha?" He said, "Sounds like a good idea. If you can

find an editor who'll do things about it." We went to one editor and they were too busy. Another we went to Ralph Macchio and he was "Too late to do it?" This was born. The Raven. Silver.

ASKWITHE: Was there much editorial input into *The Raven*?

YESS: We were coming up with the plot and it had gotten very intense and complex, quite uncomfortable to be right. Should we tell the story more

time. I did a little reworking. There is one point in particular. I presented it and went "If you maybe I'll give it in the morning" and then I pointed it out and said "If you maybe I'll do it now?" And did it now.

ASKWITHE: How did the idea of "Raven" come up?

YESS: I was in my bathroom with the telephone ring and my apartment was. Michael Kahan (creator and editor) came to me. "Hey, I don't want to do a comic, do you want to do a comic of Spider-Man?" I said "Spider-Man. I don't think I can do Spider-Man." Michael replied that to the editor, Dan O'Neil, and then Michael said "The editor has a cap?" I went "Cap? I can draw a cap?" I drew it up and read what came out over O'Neil said "Why don't you paint it?" I thought "Oh, no!" because paint over what-out doesn't work very well. I played around with it. People liked it and then O'Neil got me to do a couple more covers. I came up with some very covers, one of which ended up by your appearance on *Web of Spider-Man #1*. It was our really well. I remember saying "I like it a lot. I did several more covers."

I came up with a Spider-Man story. "The City of the Wonders." I woke up one morning and there was a thing going through my head and I went "I think I'll be in and very quickly and let me see on it." I did, and I wrote it up and found it in O'Neil's thought. It was very weird, but he all the things and drew it, so I did. I tried to be a little bit different and remembered it was when I was a kid. I had Spider-Man, thinking how much fun it could be if you could come around the city. New York can be really beautiful, gorgeous and shiny and bright. It looks like a magical city. How much fun that would be. I was the editor of the magazine put of Spider-Man. I wrote. One day would be great.

ASKWITHE: There is a great sense of color in that story.

YESS: I'd lived in New York for some time, but I wanted to do something new. At the time I thought it would be a 22 page story, but a end-up as a 13 page story. It was not as much more to the specific spots. I was around picking my location and then I drew the comic about that it happened in, the approach into the park, the streets, the houses. There was a blacked, so that showed a lot. I had a lot of plot and only a couple of pages of story, so that cut down the amount of visual room to give a really good sense of place.

ASKWITHE: Was there any major project was *The Raven*?

YESS: I was in my bathroom with the telephone ring and my apartment was. Michael Kahan (creator and editor) came to me. "Hey, I don't want to do a comic, do you want to do a comic of Spider-Man?" I said "Spider-Man. I don't think I can do Spider-Man." Michael replied that to the editor, Dan O'Neil, and then Michael said "The editor has a cap?" I went "Cap? I can draw a cap?" I drew it up and read what came out over O'Neil said "Why don't you paint it?" I thought "Oh, no!" because paint over what-out doesn't work very well. I played around with it. People liked it and then O'Neil got me to do a couple more covers. I came up with some very covers, one of which ended up by your appearance on *Web of Spider-Man #1*. It was our really well. I remember saying "I like it a lot. I did several more covers."



Web is depicted in *Marvel Fantasy #26*. Spider-Man is fighting with Amazons. *"The Raven" Silver* started out as a solo story.

YESS: Yes. "The Raven" Silver has been in production for two years now. It's hard to believe. It was going to be a four issue mini-series, but it's now going to be a Marvel Fantasy. In a month 50. It will have fully painted covers, and to be printed on nice paper. Fantasy paper. I got to do some detailed stuff. I started off with Alan and I said "Let's have some fun. It's over up with a silly story and do some more." We went to several editors and we finally convinced him O'Neil to be the editor. The story is very old but humorous, with an underlying note of danger. The plot device is that Lela doesn't get involved in a wedding. He gets angry and causes extreme chaos. Lela is supposed to be the girl of choice but he's really doing. O'Neil and I wrote the things so

we've taken him back to being just madmen, although this could cause the doom of the universe! [Laughs]. He turns the green into a gas [Laughs] and that's the story. It's up to the next four issues with getting the real gas. There are many that point, lots of fun and adventure playing off their characters. Volunteering to be insane. When the time would be too much more to be a gas [Laughs]. Falls into the hands of intergalactic creatures and eventually he has to laugh at himself and come to a large secret. Finally it goes to the "bit of love" as we call it, although it won't be called that in the book, but he starts his kiss about being so famous. They apply these kisses when they finally catch up to Lela.

Each issue will focus on one of the

characters and then they all get together, with a little help from "Doc" in the fourth issue, for a big *Avengers* Adventure. [Laughs] Yes. [Laughs] You're gonna love it. When O'Neil tells the editorial staff we wanted for a new editor. It is so off beat it doesn't answer all the things that Marvel editors usually want in a story. But I think it has found its proper home at Marvel Fantasy, and at Silver we got a fan editor who appreciates the humor. A lot! We're having fun. I know you can suggest to do that in the workday world, but we're having fun.

ASKWITHE: What are your artistic influences?

YESS: I am influenced by old love illustrations, comic news, but mostly from the crazy people. I have released time in my life as I

How does *Spider-Man* (Silver) and the *Raven* Silver as a back-up story in an earlier issue of *Marvel Fantasy #26*.





From the "Little Red Riding Hood" tale in Peter's proposed Eisner's Graphic Novel.

it without something—some other story into your head?

ASKWITB: What comes are you reading these days?

YES: You have to look off in the corners because usually the things out on the edges will be more interesting than the things in the middle. Editors will allow the personal point of view while the middle is for mass consumption, as it is less interesting to me. But, hey, I enjoyed *2711* best, but I don't know how many times it can watch it.

ASKWITB: So what comes are on the edge?

YES: Comes on the edge? I would consider Craig Russell on the edge. I enjoy his approach—Jameson, Lee & Richards, Jack Cole represents. I love *Johnsman*. Seeing *Johnsman* for the first

time was to the lot in the Sixties when I first picked up a *Spam* comic book and it wasn't done historically. But I was immediately drawn into it and went "Wow. This is great." It is a complete failure. I was very welcome. I'm also enjoying *Wonderman*, *Alfred Jones*, *Wonderman*, and *Green*. I enjoy bits and pieces of a lot of these books. I've learned that if I like the artist and writer's point of view it doesn't matter who publishes them. Their work is good, so you have to go and work it out. You can't just say a certain artist of comic books. Some people use three only to go into *Wonderman* because it was *Wonderman* publisher. Nobody pays attention to the producers of the product in any other medium.

Longy reading Alan Moore. (M)

everybody did on the planet. I enjoy the art of P. Craig Russell. Steve Pughhouse, John Robinson, Alan Lee, Stacy Pickett, Michael Kofas. I'm making the *Golem* to *Get* Golem stories. Michael is drawing.

One of the reasons I said I do it is that he's on that same scene so that I get to go to a place and I don't understand what it is. I can go to a place and ask "What's that?" He shows it, or he says for me. I'm trying to put stuff, my books and deep shadows. It's just a fun story. Nobody with a gun in this one. Home Lee writes this and they are short stories, warty, funny, weird. They'll be in *Comics* a Dave Stevens's *Book of Adventure* Magazine.

ASKWITB: What other Charles Fox material can we look forward to?

YES: I have a comic book series called *The Book of Night* coming out from Dark Horse. It's a gathering together of all the different stories I've done for *Epis*. *Epis* and other companies into three black and white volumes with a color poster for the Silver Sand in Canada. The joy of drawing is why I will probably never do a monthly book, because I have to enjoy the last panel before I go on to the next one and if I was doing a monthly book, there was much production involved. The story goes on there. I have to be able to look back and not try drawing and not just think "I remember that, but I had a good time drawing that, but I can't look at it now." Luck is the market has opened up enough where there are many illustrators and graphic artists that I can work my way of drawing into them as opposed to producing a monthly book. It is fun that comics are breaking into into regular businesses. Dark Knight and *Alfred* did really well, and a lot of the major publishers book publishers have picked up their own and have dollar signs at their eyes saying "Graphic novels, yes!" Let's do one! So everyone is jumping on the bandwagon.

I'm moving off to other publishers. I'm working with *Wonderman* (the *Book of Night*) *Night & Dream*. For them in graphic novel form, which is really difficult. I'm doing the next a lot. It is going to be, authentically and artistically, quite a stretch. It'll be really interesting. I'm working on a children's book about the *Book of Night* and *Alfred*, and doing some character paperbacks. Mainly broadening the horizons and not putting my eggs into one basket. So far I've been able to do, and enjoy, work for Marvel but there are many other publishers and I'm going to work for them all. I'm experimentally traditional. There are lots of ways to tell a story.

X-THIEVES

#5

by Henry Vogel & Mark Propert

COMICS
INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE

Also from
the same writer!
**SOUTHERN
KNIGHTS #22**



"X".
LOVER!

He's big! He's mean!

He's a beauty-hungry, fighting machine! And he's got the best for

Bianca. It's a blast from the past as one of her former flames comes between Fred & Bianca. What's a short X-Thief to do against this hunk of burning love? After all, physical violence is out of the question. Isn't it?

The #1 Super Team of the South finally faces defeat at the hands of a villain born of ancient mysticism and modern technology. A villain sworn to destroy them!

FIRSTLOOK

BACCHUS

Creator Brian Campbell says this is from his new humor series title. Bacchus, named after the god of wine, who is the main character. Bacchus is left alone mythology in his own way. And who are we to doubt him? After all, he was there.



BACCHUS



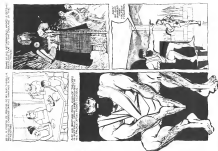
BACCHUS



BACCHUS



BACCHUS



BACCHUS





The slick and insubstantial of dealing with non-verbal people—literally! *Revealed! The Solution* in *Superman's* *Revelation* from *Johns*.

It's in the guise of humanity, it's a double-edged sword. The only way to deal with these creatures is personally. To do so, he drops in on Professor Alpha, a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

In *Superman's* *Revelation* from *Johns*, it's a double-edged sword. The only way to deal with these creatures is personally. To do so, he drops in on Professor Alpha, a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.



Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

In *Superman's* *Revelation* from *Johns*, it's a double-edged sword. The only way to deal with these creatures is personally. To do so, he drops in on Professor Alpha, a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

In *Superman's* *Revelation* from *Johns*, it's a double-edged sword. The only way to deal with these creatures is personally. To do so, he drops in on Professor Alpha, a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

In *Superman's* *Revelation* from *Johns*, it's a double-edged sword. The only way to deal with these creatures is personally. To do so, he drops in on Professor Alpha, a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science. Professor Alpha is a brilliant scientist who is a genius of genetic engineering, and a combination of both technology and science.

Lucas. Perhaps it's as simple as that. Any 8-year-old who knows the lights are on the panel. Jimmy goes by the way into the hall to encounter his new neighbor, Fred Brown, who previously offered to share his Goldfinger. The money here the lighting is reduced and we are given to know that. (Then doesn't know I just a delicious treat on the floor in order to get the money with a candle? It's a great place with the 3rd is working.) Throughout the following day Jimmy needs money as if he didn't get it only, but by night Superman has to pick him from the middle of a busy road where Jimmy is glowing over a dropped penny. The next day he has to ask for an advance on his salary in order to buy 99 cents at the store so he can get in the middle of the day. This sort of obsequious look back to childhood problems of the first order and Jimmy is forced to take a collection of time, money his level perspective for many calls that way, no money has Jimmy left the shop than the proprietor returns a face based to stand around at his home other than Fred Brown. A shadow, and a further warning, the Brown is merely an idea of the notorious "Swindle" Stinson, who stands in his Newkman "Mansion" "Laffy." But think of you who can show something that he happened to them during the blackout, indicating the entire behavior in all a disturbed plan to reduce them to poverty his Superman stops in Stinson's bedroom.

"Swindle" claims that if he'll merely return the dress, he'll return Stinson's apartment. Superman would never be so on his mind, so he'll see after And that's why "Swindle" didn't happen Jimmy was spending his money as night as well as night of making him a night. If it was good enough for Uncle Sam it's good enough for you.

The revelation out of the way, it's business as usual the next day as Jimmy Stinson sees his newspaper from the Daily Planet's living room, but that night he's being watched by a young Superman. "Mansion" Stinson then is being on his money. Jimmy is in his pants the word "insurance" on a line while Superman has to check back a job as the thought that Jimmy would not be caught.

The following morning "Swindle" positively glows at the sight of Jimmy bringing it to the station and marked him, but he's unable to get it. Jimmy then the value of the 10,000 "The \$10,000 insurance will be up to \$100,000 now," he tells Laffy. Unhappy for "Swindle" and Laffy but only after they're responsible for him and a certain cash value, Stinson as a



him chemistry set, a battery pack and an old typewriter. Nothing would ever make me sell you money! Jimmy tells Superman last night that the value of the 10,000 "The \$10,000 insurance will be up to \$100,000 now," he tells Laffy. Unhappy for "Swindle" and Laffy but only after they're responsible for him and a certain cash value, Stinson as a

SPECIAL FROM ENGLAND!!



- Two books by Les Brothers Hernandez: Jaime Hernandez's *Love and Rockets* Gilbert Hernandez's *Heartbreak Soup*
- Only 1500 copies of each book will be available. There will be no re-orders.

Pentagraphics Books is the exclusive distributor of these British albums by Jaime Hernandez and Gilbert Hernandez in the United States. They are the British counterparts to Jaime and Gilbert Hernandez's sole American albums, featuring a different selection of stories and differently designed covers, and will be available in comic shops in late October. Each volume will be signed and numbered by the Hernandezes, and there will only be 1500 copies of this edition available in the U.S. We are offering them for sale through the mail on a one-copy-per-customer basis.

AVAILABLE IN OCTOBER

☐ Enclosed is \$10.00 plus \$1.00 for postage and handling. Please send me Jaime Hernandez's *Heartbreak Soup* (limited edition).

☐ Enclosed is \$10.00 plus \$2.00 for postage and handling. Please send me Jaime Hernandez's *Love and Rockets* (limited edition).

I understand these albums are signed and numbered and distributed in the United States in limited to 1500 copies.

After 14 weeks to receive your literature. Check or money order only, please—cash and coin.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Sent to: PENTAGRAPHS BOOKS, 1900 Shakespeare Street, Suite 101, Westlake Village, CA 91361.

PENTAGRAPHS BOOKS

COMICS

in review

Rio Regular

by R.A. Jones

This good review is being brought to you courtesy of Gary Green and the good people of the Dallas Fantasy Fair. One of the perennial events in the highly respectable community is its charity auction in behalf of the American Cancer Society. One of the items generously donated to the auction this time around was a pair's subscription to both *Detective* *Heroes* and *The Comics Journal*. In "G-women" the pot, assassin Paul McFadden announced that the high bidder for this item would receive special mention—in an article written by yours truly.

In the following review is dedicated to Jerry Wingo. Jerry attends the Dallas con with over greater regularity than I do, and can be found in eager attendance at nearly every comic panel. This is for you, Jerry—see you back in Dallas in the fall.

The book I have chosen to examine is *Rio*, the seventh graphic novel to come from Comix. My reason for selecting this particular book to critique is instantly personal. I consider owner Doug Wible to be one of the finest artists I have ever come out of American comics—and I also find him to be one of the most, most endearing gentlemen I have ever been my privilege to meet. Last year, when the company's shorts all electricity on my part, however, read on.

Rio, which first appeared in *Unreal*, is a hard-boiled anthology magazine published by Eclipse, a Western in the traditional vein.

The title character is a former gangster, brought to over a party by working as a special agent for President U.S. Grant. Rio is sent to investigate the sinister slaughter of Indians at the hands of the railroad. When he is framed for murder, Rio must track down the real killer in order to clear his name.

The text takes Rio through Apache territory, where he briefly meets a girl, falls prey to an Indian massacre. Rio at last confronts his prey in Mexico, where the killer has formed a band of outcasts, which terrorizes the land. Again, all rolls. Rio conquers the killer and regains his good reputation.

Earlier, I described Rio as being "traditional." In all honesty, that was much too kind a characterization. I'm afraid I'd have been a much more accurate description of the story presented here. Not since Christmas have I seen so many characters treated out, let's take them in order.

First, there is Rio himself. The





The understatement milder and stylistic attention to detail, but weak script, in Doug Whitley's *Rio* depicts New/True Cowboys.

worthy paintings who is attempting to turn into a new kind of cowboy (a lapsed painter has been a steady of Western fiction for ages). Then we get him against the railroad. Despite how the narrative which is in one day was pulled as the means to only the action and held as a shining example of America's machine-driven quickly become a convenient ploy for Western writers writing an oily villain. Surely there must have been a few railroad presidents who wanted fat, greedy, evil snakes who would do anything—including murder—to further their own ends?

It is the middle chapter of this saga that cracks the book. As Rio enters civilian country. Here, we are (re-)introduced to Calico, Elgin, a chaotic down town struggle from Germany (re-)introduced. A young female with a Napoleon complex, he refuses to listen to the advice of those who are far more knowledgeable than he, and foolishly dismisses the Indians as being ignorant savages. The result is a foregone conclusion, he leads his men straight into a massacre. The only thing that saves Rio is the fact that he had earlier rescued a small Apache boy, Geron.

The story is staggering under its own weight as it is last bookends with the concluding chapter. Here too we are presented with the old bar, as Rio takes to the gang of bandits single-handedly. There are two small touches that elevate this chapter above the preceding two. First, Whitley dedicates a truly clever way for Rio to get out



of the dark trap into which he has walked. Second, he casually refers away one of the clutches used to death to shoot Western cowboys—by simply showing that it is almost impossible for a man to do anything with a pistol while sitting inside a galloping horse!

Also, these bits of inspiration come

too late and are far too little to save this aged tale of the Old West. Which is not to say that *Rio* is totally lacking in quality. For from it, as I said, I have long considered Doug Whitley to be one of the giants of graphic storytelling, and this effort should serve to cement his place in that pantheon. Whitley somehow manages to be simultaneously readable and evocative. Unlike most photographic comic book artists, Whitley never allows his visuals to become static. Pages are engrossing, and the illusion of motion is created with a fluid, frame sense of economy.

Such is Whitley's attention to detail that one can almost believe he has access to a time machine. Every odd, dissonant catch of clothing, every cabalistic wrinkle on every face seems to enhance the feeling of reality.

Add to that a subtle and measured use of color, and *Rio* becomes an enthralling experience. It is a bit odd only the finest looking graphics would yet to come from Comix.

A more original and compelling script to go with that look may well have made this a landmark volume—one that cemented interest in the Western for America's super hero-obsessed readers.

As it is, I hope this flawed but stunning effort is not—like *Rio*—the last of a dying breed.

SE. A. Jones, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at the San Diego Comic-Con, is now writing the long-awaited *Dark Wolf* for Malibu Comics.]

WARNING!

Read these stories and
tremble from mortal terror
of the most dangerous kind...



WASTELAND

Stories written by
Del Core &
John Decker

Drawn by
David Lloyd, William Pearson, John
Donald Simpson & Bruce Patterson

A new deluxe series with
dare-daring stories in each issue.
Debuted in September



DOC'S BOOK- SHELF



Southern Discomfort

by Dwight Decker

"A right, Sherman, let the
Way-Back Machine for the
taking of the Times!"

"But Mr. Prebly!" I thought we
were going to the Civil War!"
"No, we're taking the comic
book."

Yes, I'm taking the long way around
here, but I don't let it sit, and before
we're done, we'll be talking about the
Captain Confederacy comic book.

Not too long ago, I was reading
Clare Candor's 19th-century fiction
The Times, and came across a line that
struck a personal chord: A govern-
ment official is instructed to discover
that so, if August, 1862, when the
war takes place, "we will carry a
hundred Civil War soldiers to the pen-
sion office. Some were members when
Grant took Richmond. May and
December meetings between 1862
young boys and old soldiers Grant

many of the Republic were were quite
calm in those days."

Consider that right. I worked for
the Social Security Administration
for about a year in the mid-60s, and
the fact that Civil War soldiers were
still drawing pensions was mentioned
during the meeting then so a go-what
before we was kind of thing.

However, that wasn't why I'm
in 19th, and Candor's perception of
"wily thousands" eleven years later
makes me wonder if he forgot what
year he was supposed to be working
about.

The point of all this windy discus-
sion is that even more than 120 years
after the end of the last rifle shots
of the Civil War died away, the human
legacy of the conflict has crept into
our own time. I'm just old enough to
remember the death of the last surviv-
ing veteran in 1959, I grew up in the
town that happened to be the birth-
place of the man who wrote "Doc!"
on Grand Old of you can believe
that, and I had grade school just in
time for the centennial of the Civil

War. My teachers took classical
advantage of the centennial for the
task to point some history into the
latter days of me and my classmates
in other words, I grew up immersed
in the Civil War.

Maybe the emotional observations
left a great deal of the whole thing,
or perhaps I was simply the nothing
even managed to be said, but it seems
as though the Civil War has resided
from the national consciousness in the
years since. Not that it's been com-
pletely forgotten—the way that test the
country speak, after all, and left some
that haven't looked until this day, but
to mention an occasional TV mem-
ories, with the passing of time, it's
just faded into the background
world, I suppose, the sociopolitical
yells around in 1988.

Comic books certainly haven't done
too much with Civil War themes.
About the only examples that stand
out to come to mind are Harvey
Kurtzman's meticulously researched
stories in *The Faded Tales* and
Preston Garber's *Lost DC* would

Fluxus (1987/88), *Forever Flasher*, *Quarry Ghost*, and all the anthology titles with various heroes of, among them, me.)

Walters OGN Ray (1987/88), *Tuesday Zone*, *More Kung-Fu* (1987/88).

DC (1988/89), *Supergirl*, *Supergirl: Last Days*, *Blue Team: Angel & Ace*, *Monsters*, *Blackhawk*, *Supergirl* (and others).

In his late '80s, I would assume that the '90s might have added to now.

In what comics and issues did the Earth-One versions of SUPERMAN, BATMAN, WONDER WOMAN, JOKER, TWO-FACE, and WOLFE WINGER first appear? DC's Black Box series only listed the first appearances of the original Earth-One characters.

They did that because it would be pretty damn hard to tell down a comic issue during the gradual evolution of the 50-illustrators over the '60s characters. (Since this year was written it's gotten more confusing since we've now added versions of Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman.) My response would be not worry about it, but my very good buddy Lew Moevog does try to figure each problem in continuity out and the following is how he responded when I posed this query to him.

Really, the most point at which DC Comics changed over from characterizing "Earth-Two" stories to telling "Earth-One" stories is extremely nebulous, and even DC hasn't straightened it out quite right, when they have. My rule of thumb is that everything published from November, 1955, is an Earth-One story unless specifically dated otherwise. Since November, 1955 is the month in which the Martian Manhunter appears for the first time. This works for Batman as well, since it has been staged in various places that Batman of Earth-Two continued his active career through 1953, when he married Catwoman. There's another tricky bit with that, though. *Batman #6*, February 1954, contains a story in which Harley Don got scolded again by a dynamic idiot and becomes Two-Face once again, in the Earth-Two version. Harley Don, Two-Face... at this moment one found for the rest of his existence, as testified to by a Superman family story. Thus, this story is an Earth-One story, but the first appearance of the Earth-One Batman and Harley Don.

For Superman, it's a more difficult. Superman of Earth-Two got married to Lois Lane before 1953, as another Superman family story testified (which, of course, got as far as of Louise being out why Superman married up to World's Finest with Lois in mid-50s around while he was not married to Lois... there very first story had Lois and Robin protesting Superman's secret identity from her with a megaphone!) Of course, you can rule the positive that, in a technical history, Clark Kent of Earth-Two never worked for the Daily Planet (which he has since April, 1985), that Perry White was never his editor (which he has been since September 1971, November 1985), and that he never wore yellow spandex (but in a 1965 issue of *More Fun Comics*). The correct answer to this is that the first Earth-One Superman story is found in *More Fun Comics #98*, and that the Earth-One Superman is dated at least as far back as November, 1955, and possibly even further.

Wonder Woman is just as nebulous. If it helps, the November, 1955 issue of *Wonder Woman #78*.

As for bad guys. Well, Lex Luthor appears in *Action #78*, and Superman #61, both November 1955. The Joker appears in *Batman #61*, Feb. 1954. Catwoman is first up in *Lois Lane #76*, November 1955. Riddler shows up in *Batman #61*, May 1955. Two-Face turns up in *Batman #64*, August 1955. That is, if you discount the story in *Batman #61*. For right now, that's the best we can do. August issue of *Earth One* is first in December 1973, August 1977.

The saga continues!



Coming out in August

This issue contains the 12 page story "Long Night's Journey Into Day," illustrated by Frank Greco and Basilio Amaro, that concludes in the issue length story for #3. In it our young heroes travel to an almost world where the only laws are the ones you yourself enforce. In one eventful night they become embroiled in a three-way power struggle.

The issue concludes with the second segment of the Crocodila/Jubra saga in which Garrison, who has sacrificed everything for Crooka, must decide how his discovery of her split personality Jubra affects his motivations. He makes his decision in a 14 page story illustrated by Chuck Austin and Beckman and Basilio Amaro.

The Final Cycle: Part I is a black and white, monthly four issue mini-series. Issues #2-4 will average 24 story pages for \$1.75.

Copyright © 1987 by Mark Clegg. *The Final Cycle* and *Supergirl* are trademarks of Mark Clegg.

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS Proudly Announces The American Publication Of Gilbert And Jaime Hernandez's First Solo Albums!



Gilbert Hernandez's *Heartbreak Soup* and other stellar stories. Gilbert's early stories of life in Palmdale, including "Soup de Gout Palmdale," "Out of Context," and "The Laughing Son," the first Estrada Sigurta story, "Radio-Java," and the acclaimed "Pie Litter" (with an introduction by Alan Moore). Your paperback solo, with laminated cover and book flap.



Jaime Hernandez's *Love & Rockets* features Jaime's best early work, including "100 Reasons," "Don't Forget," and the now-classic "Love and the Rockets," a new cover by Jaime, and an introduction by Carter Shultz. Trade paperback size, with laminated covers and book flaps.

Sign up!

Single copies of *Love & Rockets* and *Heartbreak Soup* ordered directly from the publisher will be signed by the Hernandezs. This offer good through January 1, 1988.

Enclosed is \$10.00 plus \$2.00 postage and handling. Please send me _____ copies of Jaime Hernandez's *Love & Rockets*.

Enclosed is \$10.00 plus \$2.00 postage and handling. Please send me _____ copies of Gilbert Hernandez's *Heartbreak Soup*.

Enclosed is \$22. Please send me one copy each of *Love & Rockets* and *Heartbreak Soup* postage.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

510 S. FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS • 1000 Douglas Street • Suite 10 • Berkeley, CA 94710

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. • Orders in excess of \$25.00 will ship first class only.



Comics Interview

So far, there are only four titles from David Anthony Kraft's publishing company, but I like all of them.

• **MICRA** is an acronym for *Mind Controlled Remote Automaton*. It is also one heck of a good comic book by Lamar Waldron and Ted Boonthanakit. This is a 12-issue limited series about a crippled woman who can project her consciousness into an automaton (see the title).

MICRA
MIND CONTROLLED REMOTE AUTOMATON

That is a much-too-simplified summation of a rich, complex SF novel in comic-book form. Ted's art has been compared to many different American artists (some of whose work Ted has seen; he was born in Thailand and grew up in Africa) and is remarkably clear and exciting.

Grade: A.



SOUTHERN KNIGHTS

• *Aristocratic X-traterrestrial Time-Travelling Thieves* (*X-Thieves* for short) has had two first issues, which is annoying to insiders and compilers of price guides, but the bright, sprightly scripts by Henry Vogel and the appropriately humorous art of Mark Propert make up for that. One of the main features of this comic book is that, like the *Mad* comic books, the panels are filled with gags, such as the crane hotline which warns: "New universe forming — disaster imminent!"

The Southern Knights make a guest appearance in the second first issue, in which the *X-Thieves* steal the formula for original Coca-Cola. This is one of the best of the funny comic books (and one of the handful that really is funny).

Grade: A.



X-THIEVES

• I haven't seen the last couple of issues of *Southern Knights* yet, but, unless the series has gone radically downhill since #16, this is still one of the best and most original of all the supergroups. Grade: A.

• While *Comics Interview* is not a comic book, I think I can acquiesce in a recommendation. This excellent publication gives a well-rounded view of the industry, with interviews with writers, pencillers, inkers, letterers, colorists, and others.

Naturally, your interest in an issue will depend on who is being interviewed, but there have been 40 issues of *Comics Interview* and no totally dull ones — not even the *G.I. Joe* issue. Grade: A.

Four titles.

Four As. Four for four. Way to go, Dave.

— Don Thompson
COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE



Look for our distinctive logo —

— to find titles you can trust!